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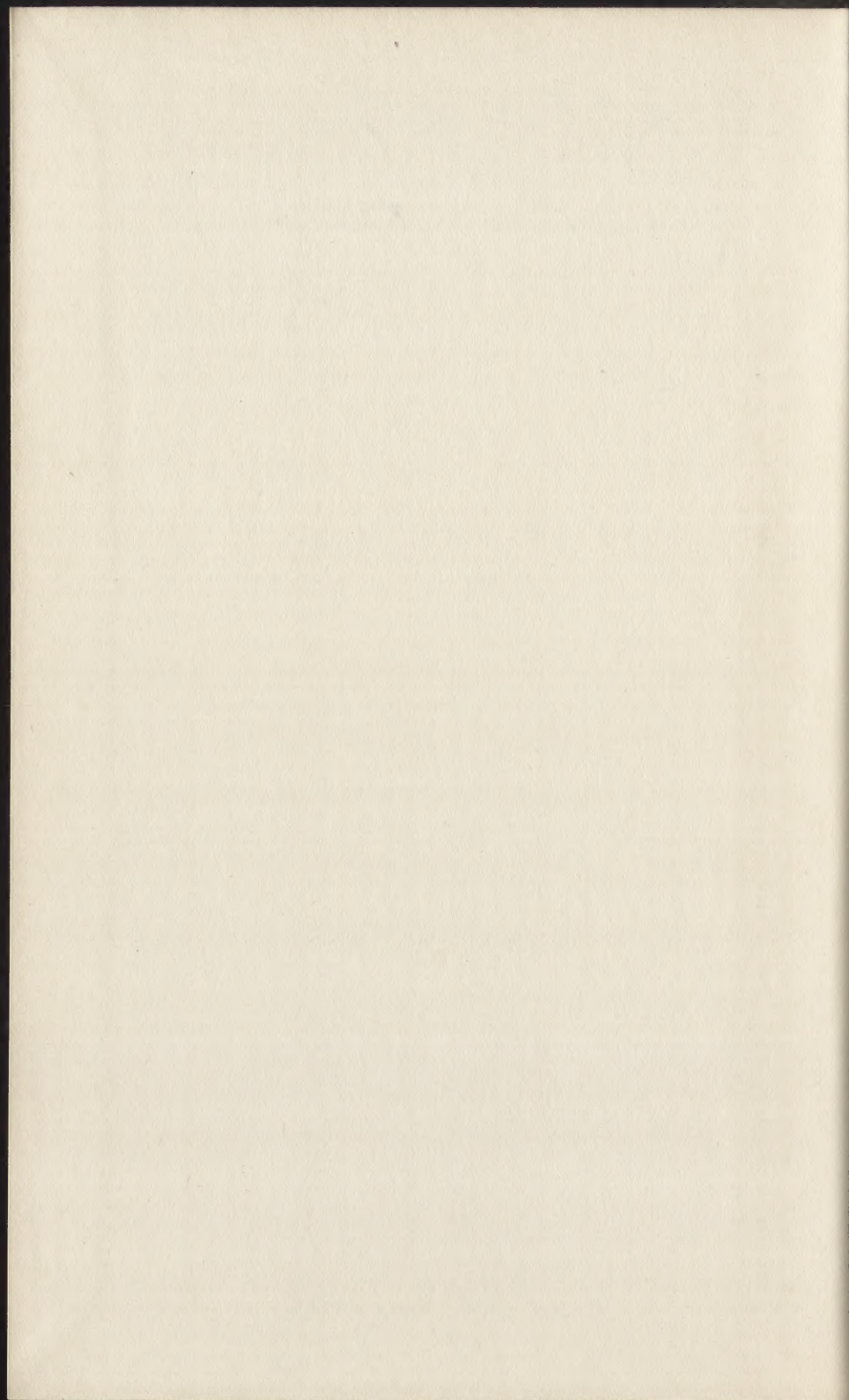
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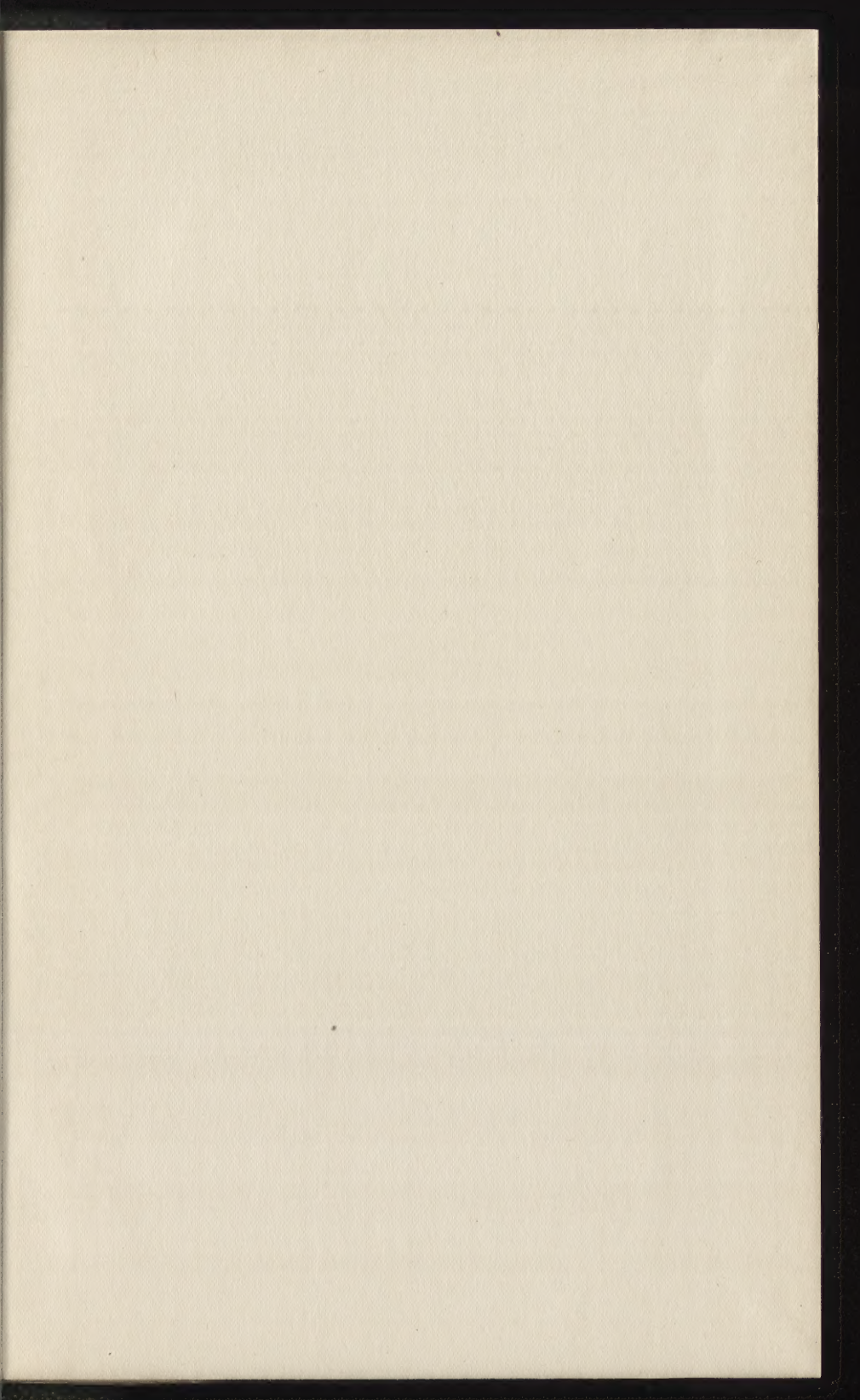
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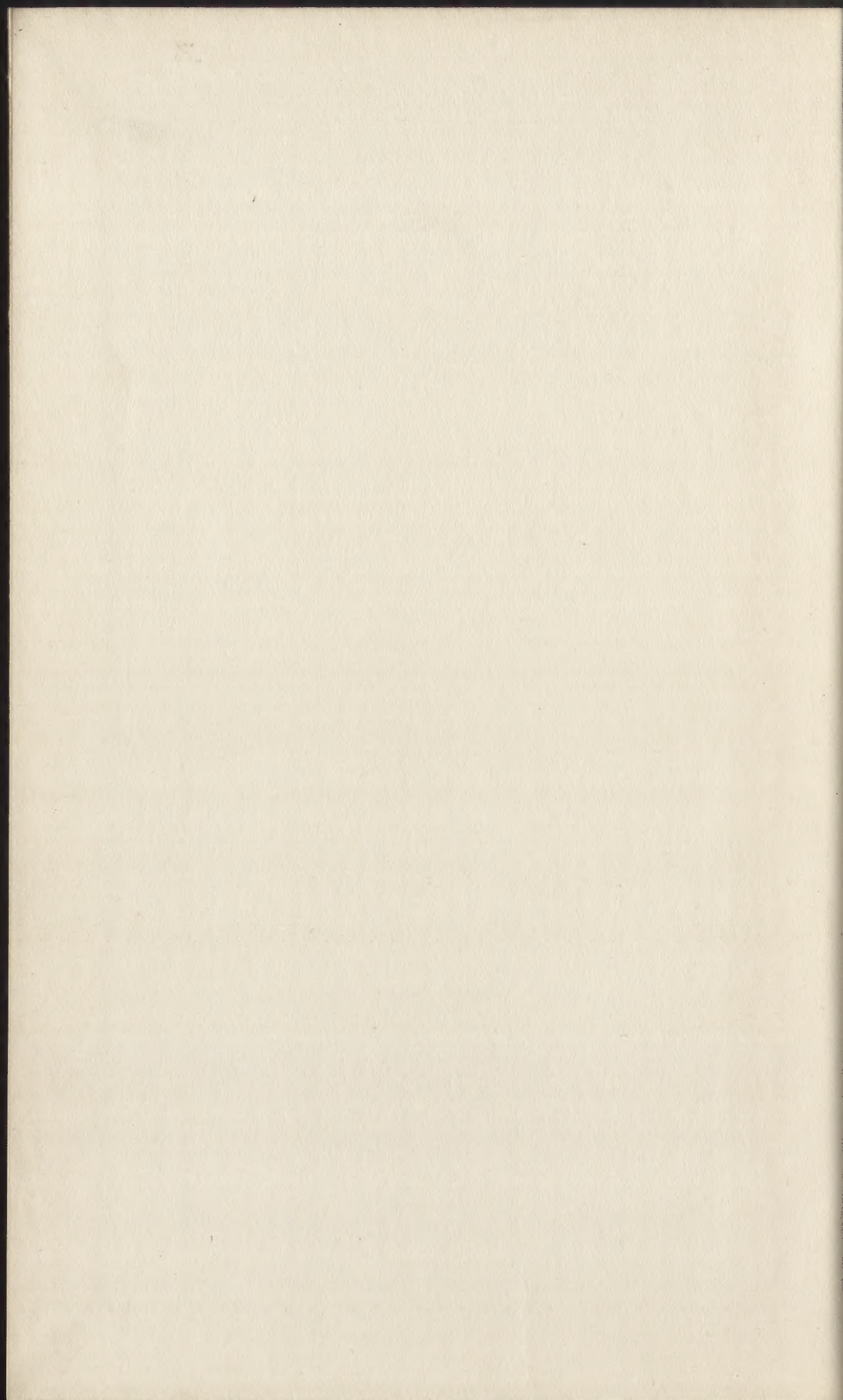
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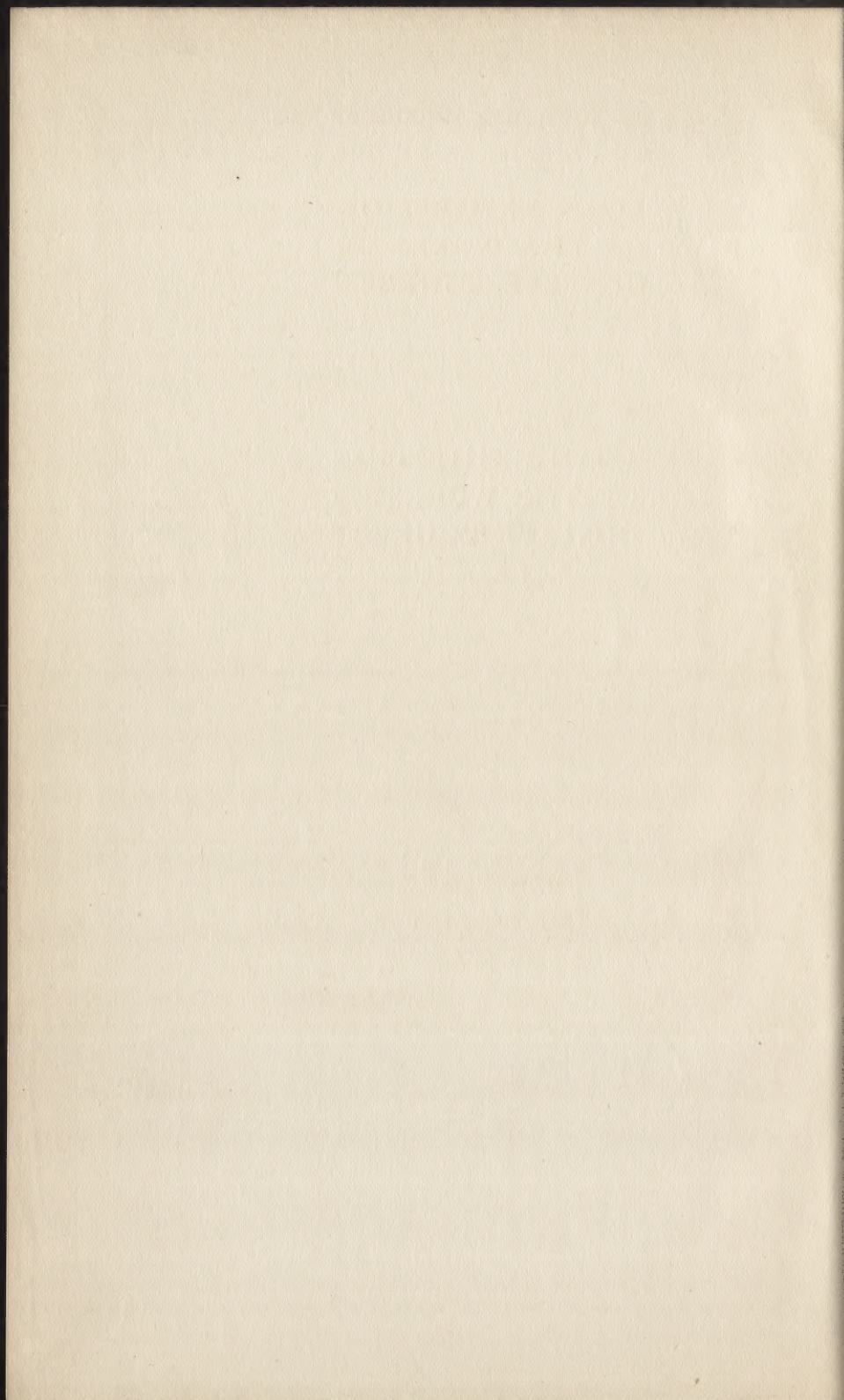






LOAN EXHIBITION
OF THE WORKS OF
GUSTAVE COURBET

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

LOAN EXHIBITION
OF THE WORKS OF
GUSTAVE COURBET

NEW YORK
APRIL 7 to MAY 18
MCMXIX

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
April, 1919

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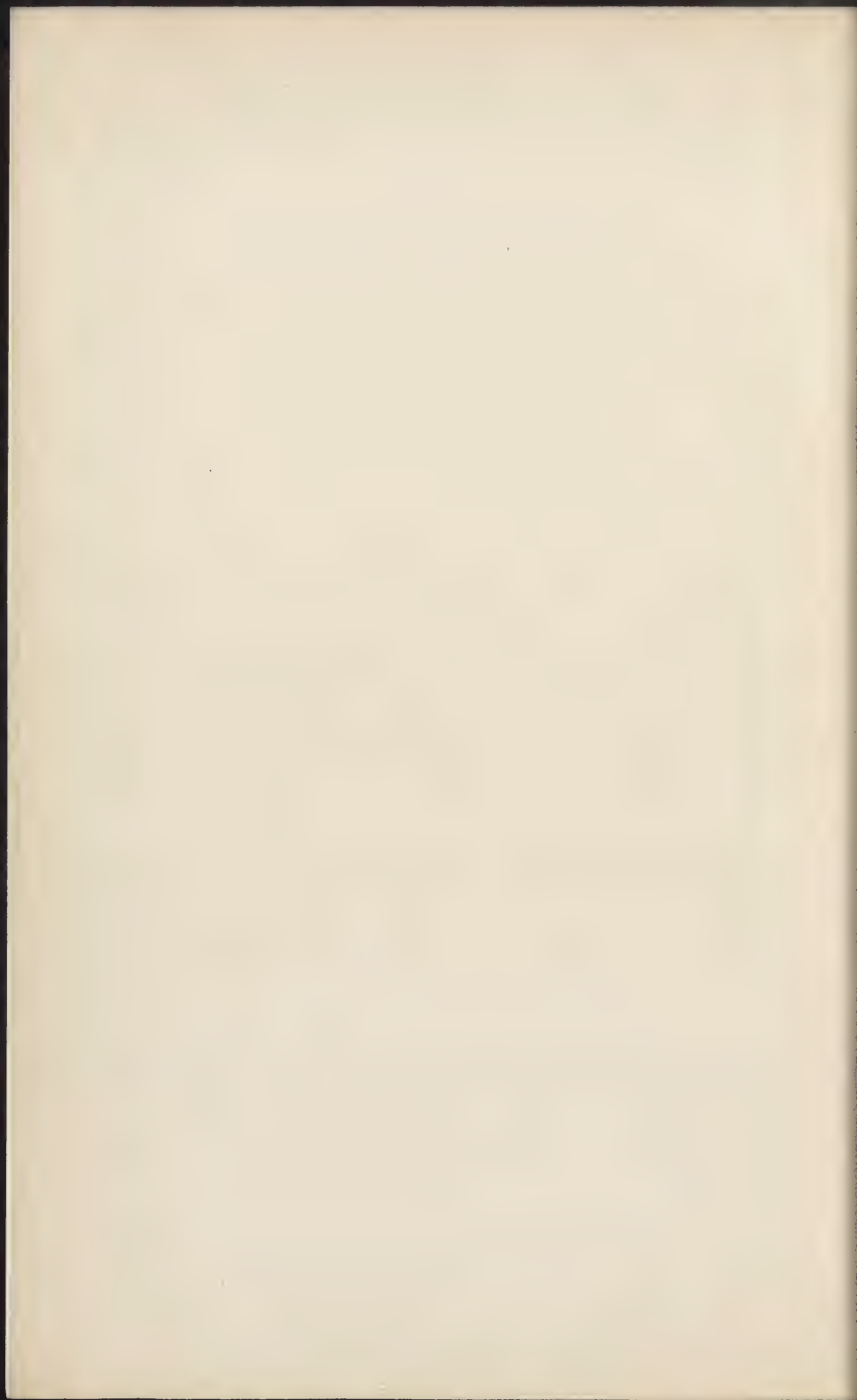
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Josef Stransky

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INTRODUCTION

NO nineteenth-century painter has had a deeper or more wide-spread influence than Gustave Courbet, the founder of the Realistic School that has furnished so many of the greatest names to modern art. Nothing should be invented, he held, only things actually seen should be represented, and the function of the imagination is to find the fullest expression of the chosen subject. His principles have been particularly potent in America from 1875 down to almost our own day. Three of the foremost American painters, Whistler, Homer, and Eakins, were his followers—Whistler directly, whereby many of his characteristics and peculiarities were determined and his early style formed, while Homer and Eakins throughout their entire careers show their reliance on him. It is therefore fitting that the hundredth anniversary of his birth, which took place on the tenth of June, 1819, should be commemorated in this country. The present loan exhibition consists of pictures chosen from the splendid series of his works owned here, which were gathered mostly before the acquisition of important examples became impossible. Our collectors were among the early ones to appreciate his excellence. To America, indeed, belongs the honor of being the first of foreign lands to own one of his masterpieces. *The Quarry (La Curée)* was bought by the Allston Club of Boston in 1866. It has lately

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passed into the possession of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and has been generously lent for this occasion. The museums and the private collectors alike have shown an enthusiastic interest in our enterprise, and on behalf of our public we beg to thank them for having made possible this illuminating exhibition.

LOOKING back from our distance, it is obvious that Courbet's principles were inevitably the outcome of the artistic development. The realism of the seventeenth century had been followed by the courtly ideality of the eighteenth; this, in turn, was displaced by the interest in classic art which to those of the time seemed a return to nature, and such it was as far as many of its elements were concerned. David, the leader of the Classicists, was entirely a naturalist in his portraits and he anticipated the evolution in frequently choosing subjects from contemporary life, like the *Oath of the Tennis Court* and his pictures of Imperial ceremonies. His pupils, Ingres and Gros, carried their naturalism still further, particularly the latter, and Géricault, his follower, might perhaps have forestalled Courbet's realism had he lived. Géricault's paintings of animals show the direction in which he was proceeding.

Realism was an instinct with Courbet. As a student he felt himself drawn to the great realists of the past—Holbein, Ribera, Caravaggio, Velazquez, the little Dutch Masters, and above all Rembrandt, "the exact image of life," he said, "who charms the intelligent but stuns and massacres the imbeciles." His early works were portraits, of himself mostly, and landscapes, with only a very few efforts in the direction of the then

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fashionable Romanticism; the picture of *Lot and his Daughters*, now in America, being one of these. His bent from the first was to copy exactly what he saw, and his work had none of the artificial arrangements and embellishments that even innovators like Rousseau or Corot felt called upon to make in their more ambitious pictures. In this, as in all his practices, he seems merely to have abandoned himself to his preferences, with no idea of establishing a new æstheticism, until the idea was suggested to him by theorizing friends. Realism was in the air and was making itself felt in literature as well as in painting.

Under these circumstances it is hard to understand the abuse that greeted Courbet's pictures when they appeared as a force about 1850. His history was no different from that of other painters of original genius. There were a few in the middle of the hubbub who believed in him, and the number slowly increased until general recognition and official sanction came. But the time of triumph in his case was cut short by the political events in which he had become enmeshed, leading to his decline and to his death in exile.

HE came of a peasant family in comfortable circumstances at Ornans, Franche-Comté. He had no gift for classical studies or literary culture, only for painting. The artist revealed through his pictures is an energetic, exuberant person of enormous appetites, filled with the joy of life and the love of his work. His genius lay in his susceptibility to the power and fecundity of nature and his marvelous power of expressing these in his art. He had a boundless admiration for

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himself, both for his person* and for his abilities in all particulars, joined to an ever-increasing hunger for celebrity. He remained always as impulsive and as heedless as a school-boy. His latest biographer, his friend Théodore Duret (whose portrait by Whistler may be seen in Gallery 20), makes these facts clear. Duret tells an incident that is significant. When past fifty Courbet surprised his friends at a party that was celebrating his final successes, by walking at noon through the main street of Bougival, clad only in bathing trunks, a bath towel thrown over one shoulder, with the object of shocking the townspeople! It was a similar devil-may-care spirit, seemingly, that prompted his activities during the Commune.

AMONG those who in the early days applauded his work were intellectual people who saw in it the manifestation in painting of what they themselves were preaching. Proudhon, the social reformer, was of the number, and Courbet frequently served as text in his book, "*L'Art et sa Destination Sociale*." *The Stone-breakers*, for instance (one of the early pictures of the same time and sort as *The Grinders* of this exhibition), Proudhon pronounced as precious morally as one of the Parables. It is a picture of two men working at the roadside—one old and miserable, brutalized by his monotonous

* His good looks as a young man can be judged by the portrait of himself as *The Violoncellist*. Other self-likenesses in this exhibition are found in *The Quarry*, where he is the huntsman leaning against the tree, in the *Huntsman on Horseback Finding the Trail*, and in the *Landscape by the Sea*, where he appears as one of the small figures at the left.

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labor, and the other young. Proudhon found in the painting many statements: for example, that the young were victimized; that slavery was preferable to the social order of the time because slaves as assets were protected from overwork as were beasts of burden; that no one could be certain of escaping misery and poverty; that the condition of the stone-breakers was that of six million souls in France. His conclusion was that the picture should be set up as an altarpiece in some church. Of course Courbet, in its execution, had thought only of setting down a familiar spectacle, but he was quite ready, nevertheless, to consider himself the Messiah of the Social Revolution.

So he assumed the position. It is time to regenerate humanity as I have regenerated painting: this was his attitude. After the fall of Napoleon III, his opportunity for action came. He stayed in Paris during the siege and was named the president of an unofficial commission of artists selected to take charge of the works of art belonging to the people. As such he asked for authorization to take down (*déboulonner*) the Vendôme column, wishing to remove a monument to Napoleon and the Grande Armée which celebrated despotism and conquest, and, besides, stood for the Imperial régime that was responsible for the plight of France. The destruction of the column did not take place until later, under the Commune. Though Courbet was not of the voting body that decided upon the action, he was held responsible for it by the Republic, was imprisoned, and finally condemned to pay the cost of the reconstruction, amounting to 323,000 francs. He cut a sorry figure at the trial and in 1873 escaped to Switzerland.

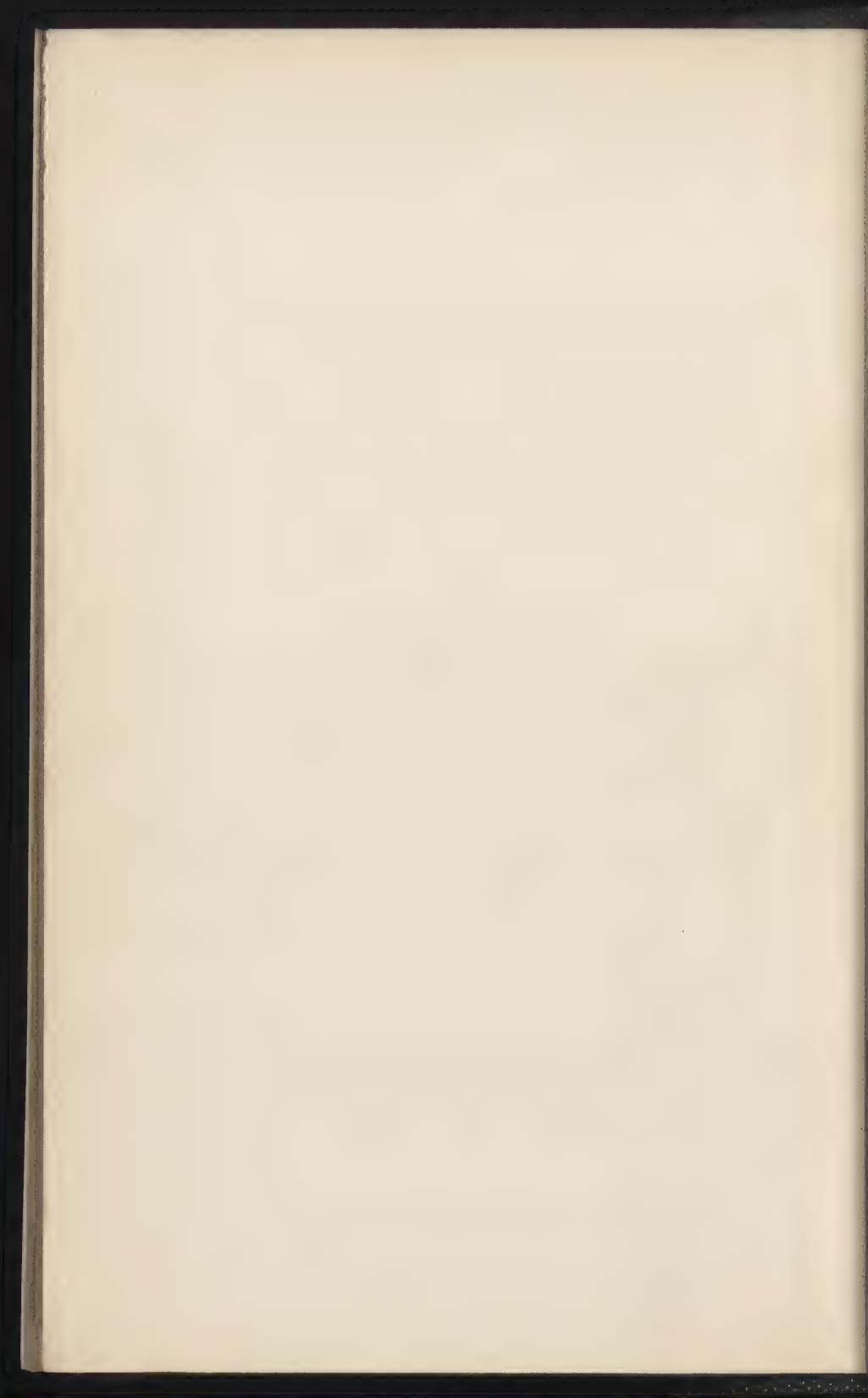
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Though he continued to paint remarkable pictures, his old pride and defiance had been quenched in his troubles. He died in 1877.

His commentators without exception feel called upon to condone his personality, but what was questionable in the man becomes admirable in the artist. All his abilities were concentrated in his art, and there, because he was a great painter, unreason and vanity are transmuted into steadfastness and sublime self-confidence. His genius had clearly defined limitations, to be sure; but once these be recognized and accepted, his rank is unquestionably with the greatest.

BRYSON BURROUGHS.

CATALOGUE



CATALOGUE

The pictures are catalogued chronologically so far as their dates are known. All are painted in oil on canvas.

1 THE VIOLONCELLIST

A portrait of the artist at about twenty-eight years of age. Painted in 1846-1847; refused at the Salon of 1847; exhibited at the Salon of 1848 and at the Courbet Exhibitions in Paris in 1855 and 1867.

H. 45; w. 35 inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet.*

Lent by Colonel C. E. S. Wood.

2 PORTRAIT OF URBAIN CUENOT, THE MAYOR OF ORNANS

The sitter was a friend of the artist. The portrait was painted at Ornans in 1846 or 1847; refused at the Salon of 1847; exhibited at the Salons of 1848 and 1852, at the Universal Exposition of 1855, and the Courbet Exhibition in Paris in 1867. The figure of M. Cuenot in a similar position appears in *A Funeral at Ornans* (Salon 1850-51).

H. 37½; w. 29½ inches. Signed, lower left: *Courbet.*

Lent by The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

3 THE GRINDERS (LES RÉMOULEURS)

It is of about the same date as *The Stone-breakers* (*Les Casseurs de Pierres*), which created much excitement in the Salon of 1850.

H. $34\frac{3}{8}$; w. $40\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

4 THE VILLAGE GIRLS (LES DEMOISELLES DE VILLAGE)

The three sisters of the artist, one of whom gives a piece of cake to a peasant child: the place is a pasture above the rocks at Ornans. Painted at Ornans about 1850; exhibited at the Salon of 1851 and at the Courbet Exhibitions in Paris in 1855 and 1867.

H. $76\frac{3}{4}$; w. $102\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by Mrs. Harry Payne Bingham.

5 PORTRAIT OF ALPHONSE PROMAYET

He was a friend of Courbet's and appears in his famous early picture, *Un Après-midi à Ornans*, now in the Lille Museum. At one time he was a violinist in the orchestra of the Hippodrome at Paris. Painted about 1851 and exhibited at the Salon of that year, at the Courbet Exhibitions at Paris in 1855 and 1867, and at the Memorial Exhibition at the Beaux-Arts in 1882.

H. $42\frac{1}{4}$; w. $27\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

6 THE AMAZON—PORTRAIT OF LOUISE COLET

She was a writer of stories and is supposed to have been the original of *Amandorine* in Champfleury's "Mascarade de la Vie Parisienne"; born 1810, died 1876. Painted about 1856 and considered by Riat ("Courbet," p. 172) to be one of the artist's most beautiful portraits.

H. 45½; w. 35 inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet.*

Lent anonymously.

7 HUNTING DOGS

The same dogs occur in *The Quarry* (No. 10). Presumably this is a preliminary work for that picture.

H. 36¾; w. 58¼ inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet.*

Lent anonymously.

8 PORTRAIT OF M. GUEYMARD OF THE OPERA IN THE RÔLE OF ROBERT LE DIABLE

It is the moment when Robert sings, "Oui, l'or est une chimère." His companions are shown with him; in his right hand he raises the dice-box which will decide his fortune. Painted in 1856 or 1857 and shown in the Salon of that year, at the same time as *The Quarry*, and in the Memorial Exhibition, Beaux-Arts, in 1882.

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

H. 58; w. 42 inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by Mrs. A. A. Anderson.

9 PORTRAIT OF MADAME CROCQ (LA FEMME AU GANT)

Painted in 1857 and exhibited at the Salon of that year, in the Courbet Exhibition in 1857, and in the Memorial Exhibition at the Beaux-Arts in 1882.

H. $69\frac{5}{8}$; w. 43 inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

10 THE QUARRY (LA CURÉE)

The old title contains also the *Hunt of the Roebuck in the Forests of the High Jura*. The huntsman leaning against the tree is Courbet himself. When first exhibited in the Salon of 1857 the picture was not so large as at present, a strip about eighteen inches wide having since been added at the top, and one six and one half inches wide at the left. This was the first important picture by Courbet to be bought outside of France. It was purchased by the Allston Club of Boston in 1866 and passed into the possession of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in 1918.

H. $82\frac{1}{2}$; w. $70\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

WORKS OF GUSTAVE COURBET

11 THE MEDITERRANEAN

H. $23\frac{1}{2}$; w. $33\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by Burton Mansfield.

12 NEIGHBORHOOD OF ORNANS (ENVIRONS D'ORNANS)

H. $28\frac{3}{4}$; w. $36\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Dated and signed, lower left: 62 *Gustave Courbet*.

Lent by Mrs. Michael Gavin.

13 THE SOURCE

Painted about 1862.

H. $47\frac{1}{2}$; w. $29\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

14 AFTER THE HUNT

H. 93; w. $73\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

15 NUDE WOMAN—THE CHERRY
BRANCH (LA BRANCHE DE CÉRISIER)

Painted at Saintes about 1863; shown at the Courbet Exhibition in Paris, 1867.

H. $29\frac{1}{2}$; w. 24 inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

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16 THE SOURCE OF THE LOUE

Painted about 1864 and shown at the Courbet Exhibition in Paris in 1867.

H. $39\frac{3}{8}$; w. $56\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Signed, lower edge near the center: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

17 THE ROCKY STREAM—THE BROOK OF THE BLACK WELL

H. 21; w. $24\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by the Estate of Charles H. Senff.

18 THE BLACK WELL (LE Puits Noir)

H. $21\frac{1}{2}$; w. 35 inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by Josef Stransky.

19 LANDSCAPE

H. 29; w. $36\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by W. Endicott Dexter.

20 THE BROOK OF THE BLACK WELL (LE Puits Noir)

H. 32; w. $39\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Dated and signed: 65 *G. Courbet*.

Lent by Charles W. Gould.

WORKS OF GUSTAVE COURBET

21 LANDSCAPE BY THE SEA (PAYSAGE
AU BORD DE LA MER)

Painted about 1865.

H. 26; w. 32 inches. Signed, lower right: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by Mrs. Charles H. Senff.

22 THE ISOLATED ROCK

Painted on the Normandy coast about 1865.

H. 25¾; w. 32 inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

23 THE WOMAN WITH THE MIRROR
(LA BELLE IRLANDAISE)

The sitter, Joanna Abbot, was Whistler's companion for a number of years and the model for many of his paintings, including the *White Girl* of the Salon des Refusés in 1863, the *Little White Girl* of 1865, and others. Whistler and she spent the summer of 1865 at Trouville at the time Courbet was there. This picture was shown at the Courbet Exhibition, Paris, 1867, and at the Memorial Exhibition (Beaux-Arts, 1882). Another version of the work exists.

H. 22⅞; w. 26 inches. Dated and signed, lower left: 66 *Gustave Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

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24 THE WOMAN WITH THE PARROT
(LA FEMME AU PERROQUET)

Painted at Paris in 1866. The model has copper-colored hair that resembles that of *La Belle Irlandaise*. The picture was one of the successes of the Salon of 1866; it was shown in the Courbet Exhibition of 1867 and the Memorial Exhibition of 1882 at the Beaux-Arts.

H. 50; w. 77 inches. Dated and signed, lower left: 66 *Gustave Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

25 THE LAKE

H. 28½; w. 36 inches. Dated and signed, lower left: 66 *G. Courbet*.

Lent by Mrs. Michael Gavin.

26 HUNTSMAN ON HORSEBACK FINDING
THE TRAIL (CHASSEUR À CHEVAL RE-
TROUVANT LA PISTE)

The horseman is Courbet himself; the horse scents footprints in the snow. Painted about 1867; exhibited in the Courbet Exhibition, Paris, 1867.

H. 47; w. 37¾ inches.

Lent anonymously.

27 PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN (MADAME
FROOD)

Painted between 1866 and 1870.

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H. $25\frac{1}{2}$; w. $19\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

28 THE WAVE

Painted about 1865-69. Exhibited at the Memorial Exhibition at the Beaux-Arts in 1882.

H. $25\frac{3}{4}$; w. $34\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

29 LANDSCAPE

H. $21\frac{3}{4}$; w. $24\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet*.

Lent by Charles W. Gould.

30 DEER IN THE FOREST

H. $51\frac{1}{2}$; w. $38\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Dated and signed, lower left: 68 *Gustave Courbet*.

Lent by The Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

31 THE WOMAN IN THE WAVES (LA FEMME À LA VAGUE)

The same model as in the *Woman with a Parrot*, says Riat ("Courbet," p. 264), and adds that the picture upholds without detriment the comparison with Titian's *Venus Anadyomene* in the Bridge-water Collection in London. Shown in the Memorial Exhibition, Beaux-Arts, 1882.

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H. 25; w. 21 inches. Dated and signed, lower left:
68 *G. Courbet*.

Lent anonymously.

32 MARINE

H. 21; w. 29 inches. Signed and dated, lower
right: *G. Courbet* 69.

Lent by the Estate of Charles H. Senff.

33 STORMY WEATHER AT ÉTRETAT

Painted about 1868-70.

H. 28¾; w. 36¼ inches. Signed, lower right: *G.
Courbet*.

Lent by Joseph Durand-Ruel.

34 THE MUSSEL GATHERERS

H. 14½; w. 20½ inches. Signed, lower left: *G.
Courbet*.

Lent by Burton Mansfield.

35 MARINE

H. 20; w. 24 inches. Signed, lower right: *G.
Courbet*.

Lent by D. Kelekian.

36 ÉTRETAT

H. 28⅛; w. 36 inches. Signed, lower right: *G.
Courbet*.

Lent by Josef Stransky.

WORKS OF GUSTAVE COURBET

37 SPRING FLOWERS

Painted at the prison of Sainte Pélagie, Paris, 1871.

H. 26; w. 32 inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet.*

Lent anonymously.

38 THE FISHERMAN

H. $19\frac{3}{4}$; w. 24 inches. Dated and signed, lower left: 72 *G. Courbet.*

Lent by Mrs. E. C. Walker.

39 THE CASTLE OF CHILLON

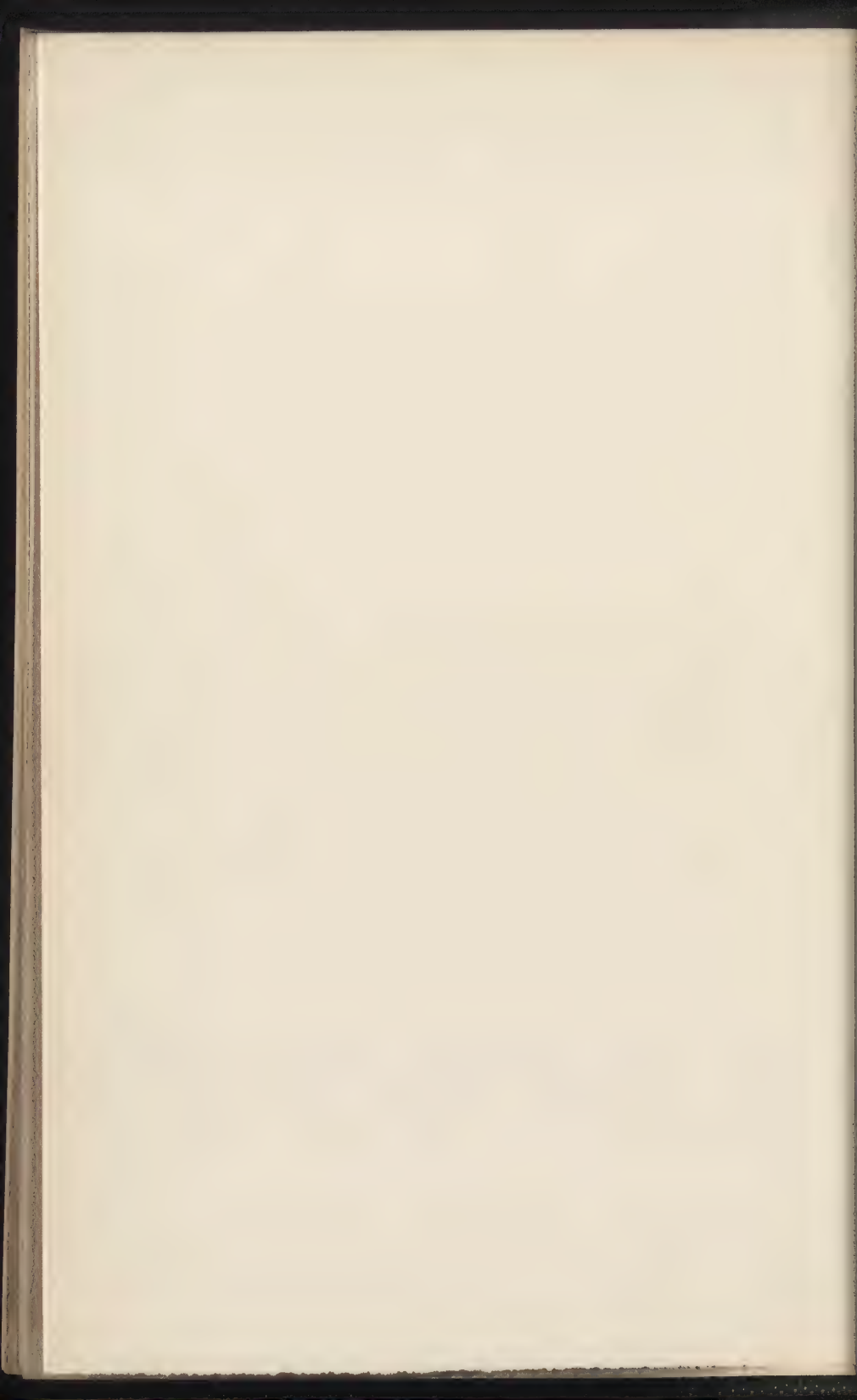
H. $34\frac{1}{2}$; w. $45\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Dated and signed, lower left: 73 *G. Courbet.*

Lent by C. W. Kraushaar.

40 THE FRINGE OF THE FOREST

H. 35; w. $45\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Signed, lower left: *G. Courbet.*

Lent by Charles W. Gould.



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THE VIOLONCELLIST



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PORTRAIT OF URBAIN CUENOT
THE MAYOR OF ORNANS



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THE GRINDERS
(LES RÉMOULEURS)



4

THE VILLAGE GIRLS
(LES DEMOISELLES DE VILLAGE)



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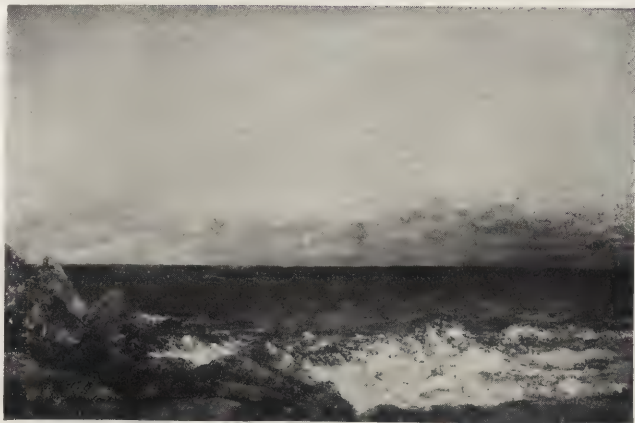
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PORTRAIT OF MADAME CROCQ
(LA FEMME AU GANT)



IO

THE QUARRY
(LA CURÉE)



II

THE MEDITERRANEAN



12

NEIGHBORHOOD OF ORNANS
(ENVIRONS D'ORNANS)



13
THE SOURCE



14

AFTER THE HUNT



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NUDE WOMAN—THE CHERRY BRANCH
(LA BRANCHE DE CÉRISIER)



16

THE SOURCE OF THE LOUE



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THE ROCKY STREAM—
THE BROOK OF THE BLACK WELL



18

THE BLACK WELL
(LE PUIITS NOIR)



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LANDSCAPE



20

THE BROOK OF THE BLACK WELL
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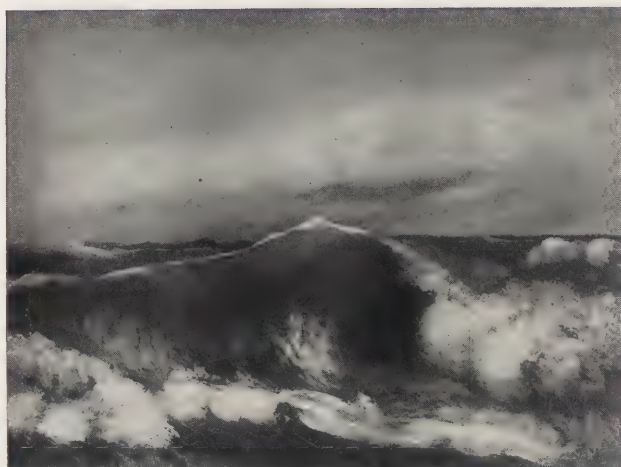
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HUNTSMAN ON HORSEBACK FINDING THE TRAIL
(CHASSEUR À CHEVAL RETROUVANT LA PISTE)



27

PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN
(MADAME FROOD) .



28

THE WAVE



29

LANDSCAPE



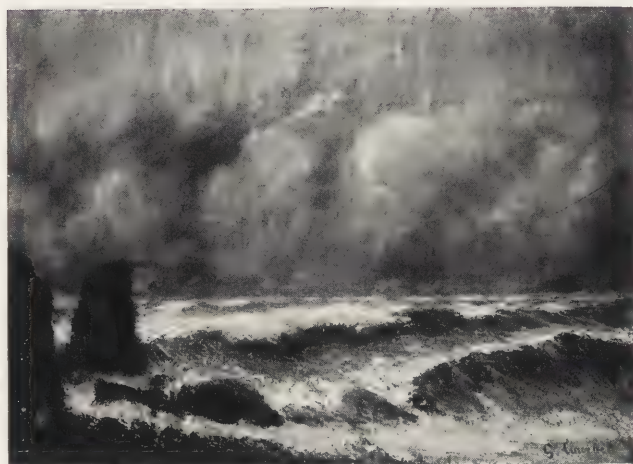
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DEER IN THE FOREST



31

THE WOMAN IN THE WAVES
(LA FEMME À LA VAGUE)



32

MARINE



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36

ÉTRETAT



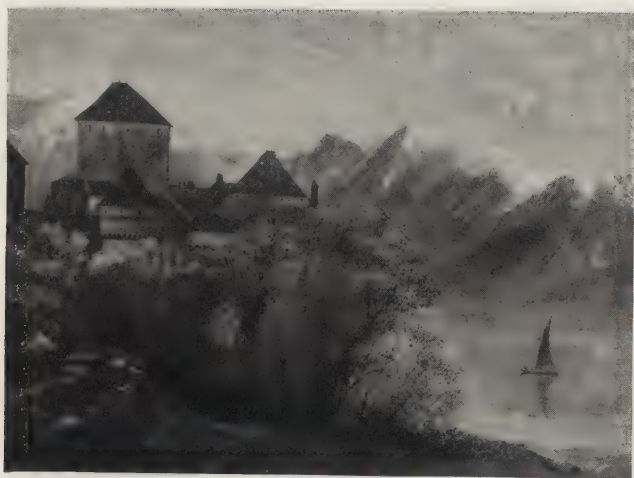
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SPRING FLOWERS



38

THE FISHERMAN



39

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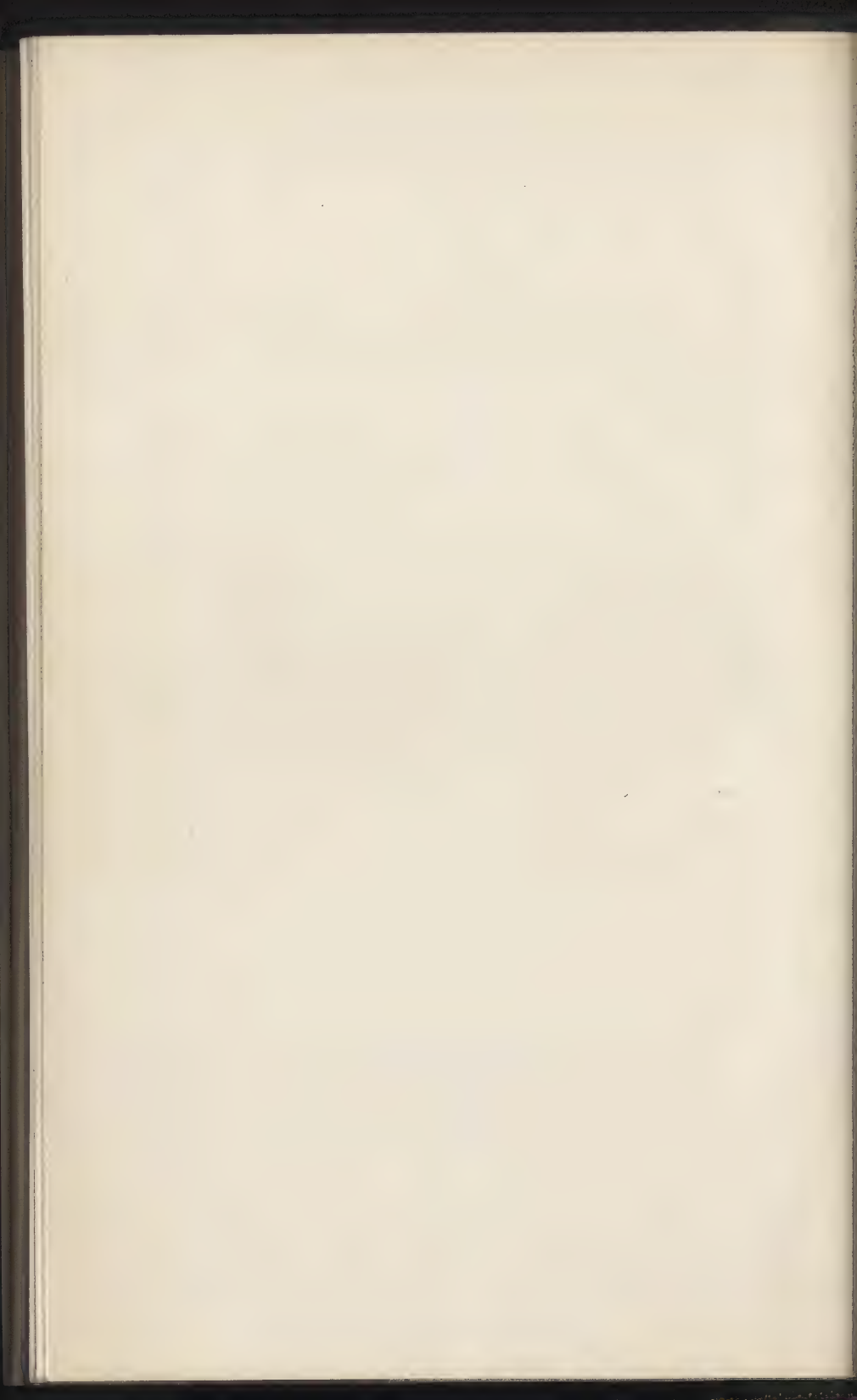
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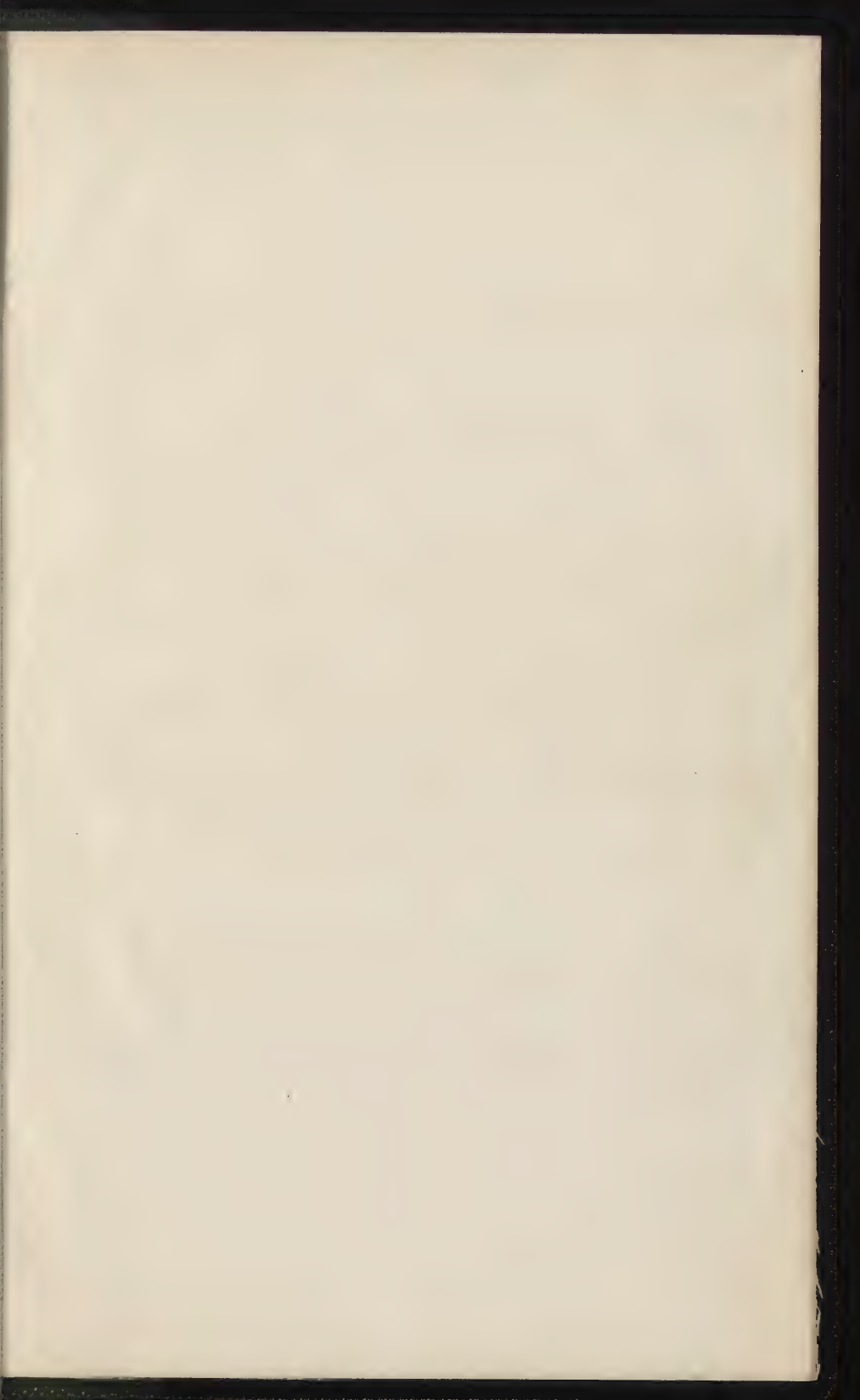
THE FRINGE OF THE FOREST

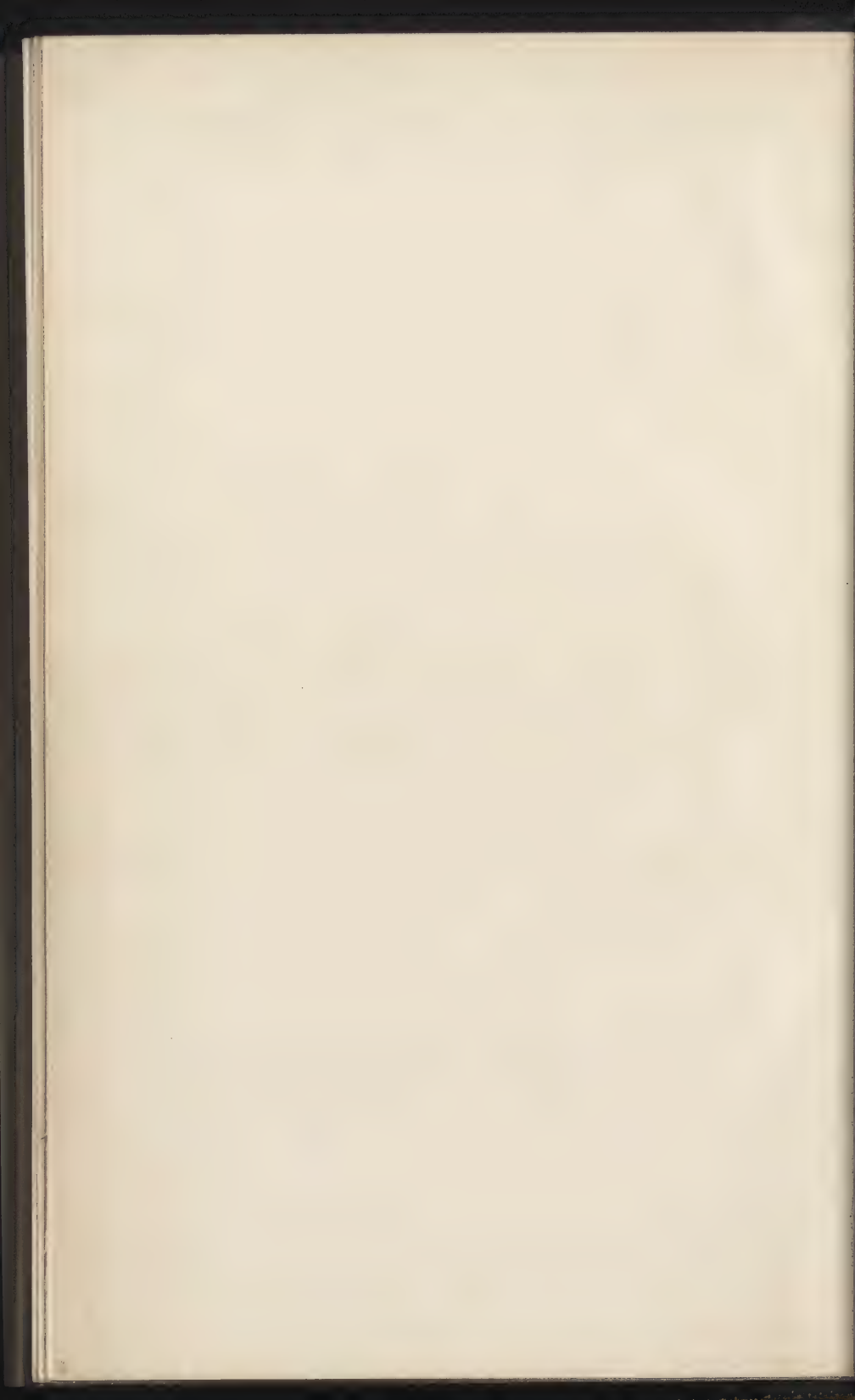
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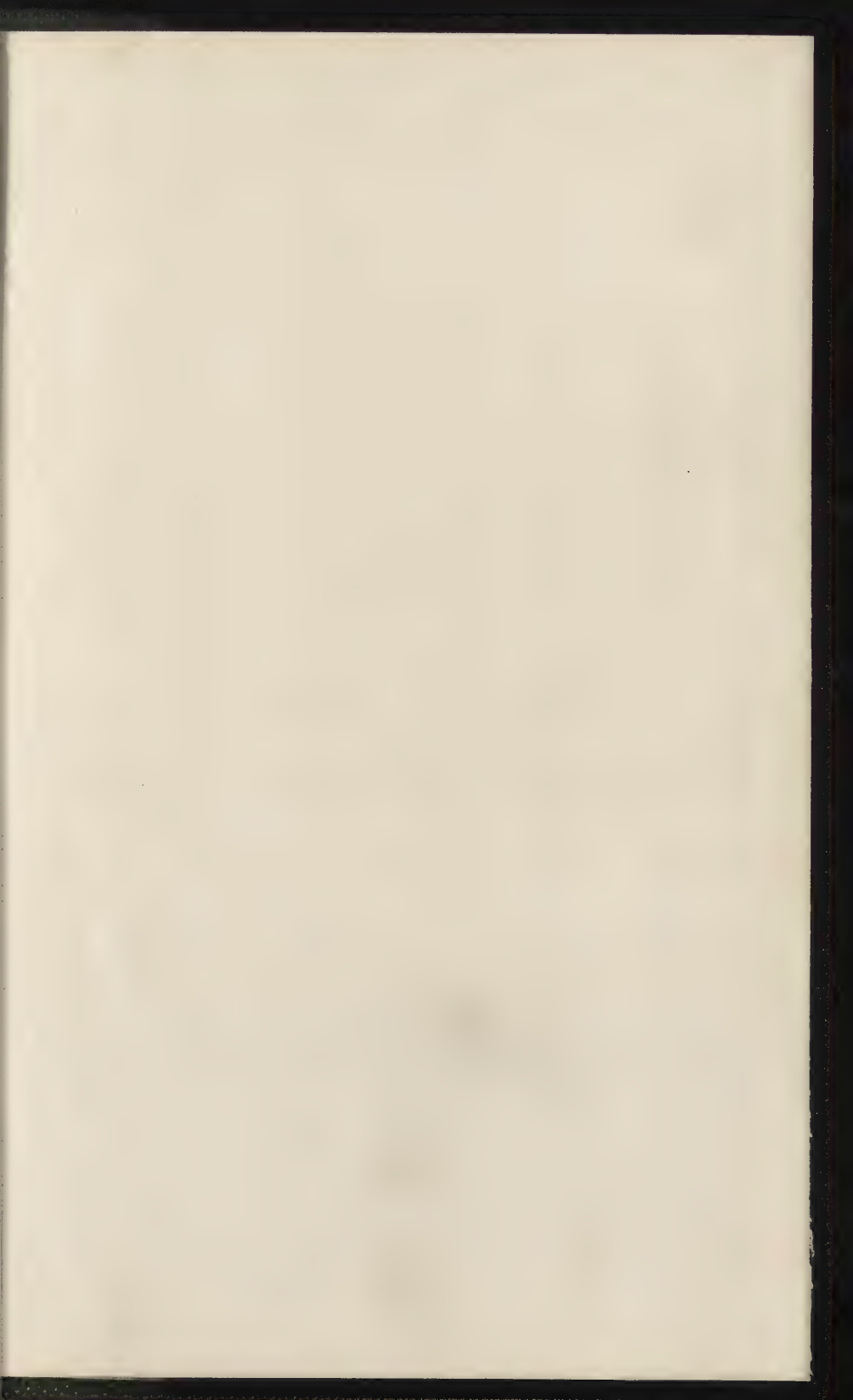
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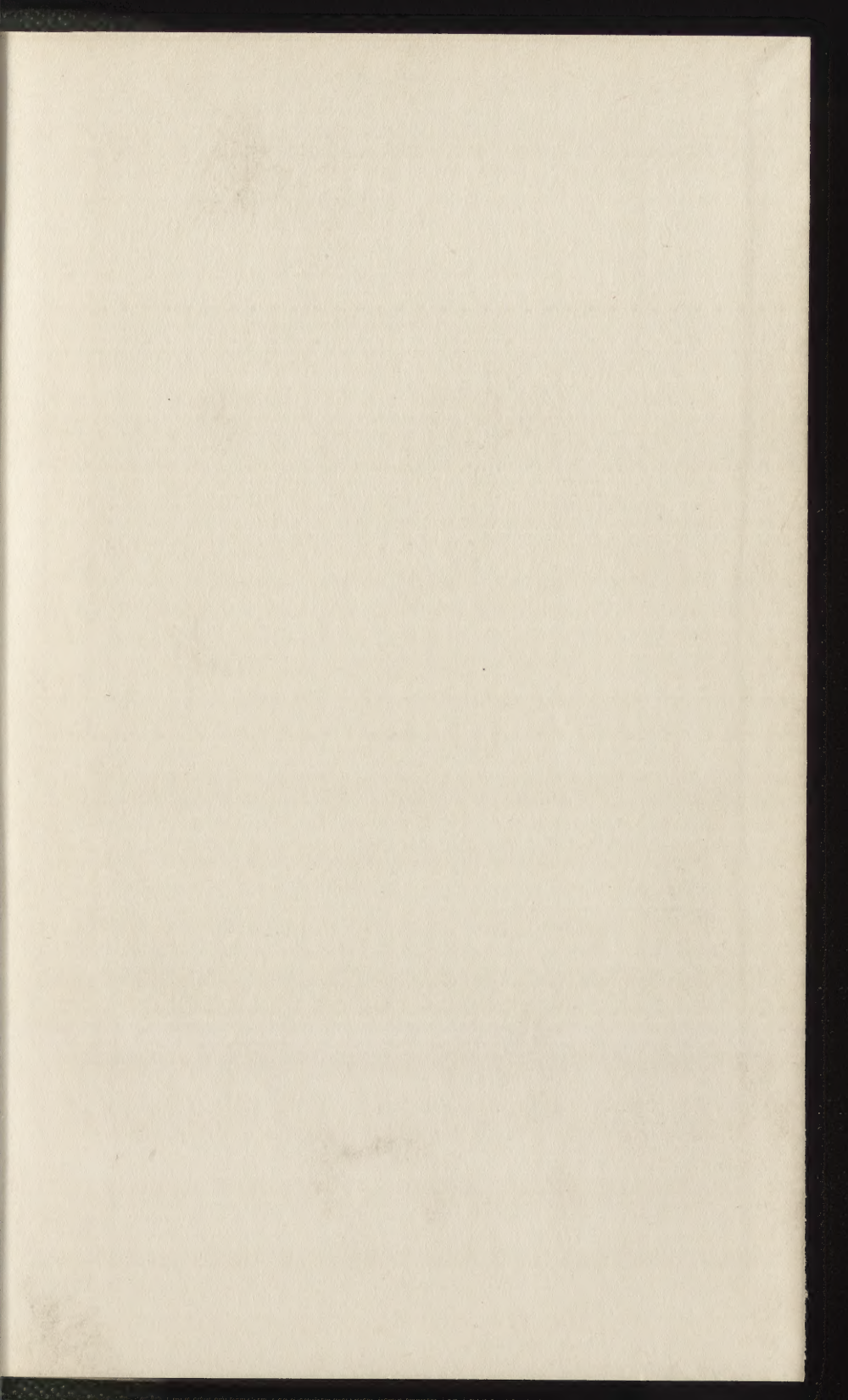












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